

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SCCT-01

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 164311 TOSEC 060133

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: ABDUCTION OF US ARMY OFFICER IN BEIRUT

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE SITUATION AS OF 1930 HOURS EDT, JULY 11, 1975 AS REGARDS THE ABDUCTION OF COLONEL MORGAN.
2. THE US PRESENTED TO UNRWA TODAY A SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION OF \$6 MILLION. THE PRESENTATION HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR SOME TIME, BUT AMBASSADOR GODLEY EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IT COULD BE A PRODUCTIVE FACTOR IN ACHIEVING THE RELEASE OF COLONEL MORGAN. WHILE THE CONTRIBUTION WAS PRESENTED IN NEW YORK, AMBASSADOR GODLEY CALLED ON THE UNRWA COMMISSIONER GENERAL IN BEIRUT TO ADVISE HIM OF IT AND THE EMBASSY STATEMENT AND PHOTOGRAPHS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THE LOCAL PAPERS FOR THEIR JULY 12 EDITIONS.

3. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF PRESS REPORTS THAT FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS WERE TAKING PLACE IN KARANTINA QUARTER OF BEIRUT (THE

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AREA WHERE COLONEL MORGAN'S ABDUCTORS HAD DEMANDED THAT

DISTRIBUTION BE MADE) THE TASK FORCE LEARNED FROM AMBAS-
SADOR GODLEY BY TELEPHONE THAT SOME DISTRIBUTIONS OF RICE
WERE INDEED BEING MADE. THE EMBASSY SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED
IT WAS INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT, FOLLOWING A MEETING
BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER, INTERIOR MINISTER AND THE

PRESIDENT OF THE INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION, THE LATTER OR HIS
ASSOCIATION HAD PAID FOR SOME FOOD (AND POSSIBLY OTHER)
DISTRIBUTIONS IN KARANTINA. IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES AT THE
DEPARTMENT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING THE SPOKESMAN SAID
REPORTS THAT THE US WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DISTRIBUTIONS
WERE FALSE.

4. THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT WERE
DELIVERED TO COLONEL MORGAN'S MOTHER AND WIFE.

5. PRIME MINISTER KARAME, IN A PRESS CONFERENCE, IS
REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD JOURNALISTS THAT COLONEL MORGAN WILL
BE RELEASED SOON, BUT HE DID NOT ELABORATE.

6. THERE WERE PRESS REPORTS FROM BEIRUT THAT TWO HIGH
RANKING SYRIAN OFFICERS WERE IN THE CITY IN CONNECTION
WITH MORGAN'S ABDUCTION. EMBASSY DAMASCUS WAS UNABLE TO
CONFIRM THIS, BUT IS CONVINCED THAT THE SYRIAN GOVERN-
MENT'S EFFORTS TO SECURE MORGAN'S RELEASE ARE SERIOUS,
APPARENTLY FOCUSED ON EXERTING LEVERAGE ON THE PFLP-GC.
INGERSOLL

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